

*The Common Prayer-Book no
English Mass-Book :*

A
S E R M O N.

Preach'd at the CHURCH of

BASSINGBOURN

In the County of

CAMBRIDGE:

BEING

The Anniverfary of the De-
dication of the faid *Church*.

By **THO. HEWERDINE**, Vicar.

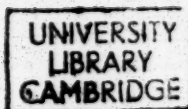
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L O N D O N,

Printed for R. WILKIN, at the *King's Head*
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Price Three Pence.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

IN the aforesaid Church of *Bassingbourn* there is a Library just now founded by a private Gentleman, for the Use and Benefit of such of the neighbouring Clergy, and other Lovers of Learning, as are not otherwise furnish'd with Books convenient, necessary, or sufficient for them. If any Gentlemen will be pleas'd to contribute any Book or Books towards the Augmentation of the said Library, they shall with all just Gratitude be acknowledg'd as publick Benefactors.



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T O

Granado Pigott }
Edward Nightingale } *Esquires*

A N D

The rest of the Gentlemen and Parishio-
ners of *Bassingbourn* and *Kneefworth*.

Worthy and Good Sirs,

W *HEN this Sermon comes to your Hands (which has nothing to recommend it, but the Rural Plainness of its Dress) I know, you will expect I should here say something concerning the Time and Place, when and where it was preach'd. And*

You will remember, that it was preach'd on the Wake, or Feast of the Dedication of our Parish-Church : Which is no Novel or Upstart Commemoration-Festival ; but continu'd down to us Year after Year, from the very Original Consecration.

And I find in an Old Book of the Church Wardens Accounts, that above 200 Years ago, it was observ'd for several Days together ; but that in the Year of our Lord 1511, in the Third Year of the Reign of King Henry VIII. St. Margaret's Day

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(July 20.) *was the grand and principal Day of the Feast, and particularly distinguish'd with more than ordinary Solemnities. For on that Day of that Year, at a publick and very great Expence (as the World went then) was acted the Play of the Holy Martyr St. George. And at the same time was made a very costly, plentiful and free Entertainment; towards the Charge of which, besides many private Contributions, there were no fewer than Seven and twenty of the Neighbouring Towns that contributed out of their publick Stocks, viz. Royston, Tharfield, Melbourn, Lyttlington, Whaddon, Stepulmordon, Berly, Ashewell, Abyngton, Orwell, Wendey, Wyndpole, Meldreth, Arryngton, Shepreth, Kelsey, Wyllyngham, Fulmar, Gyl dynmordon, Taddelow, Crawdeyn, Hattely, Wraistlyngworthe, Hasselyngssfeld, Barkwey, Foxtun, Kneseworthe. For so they are set down in the same Order (I presume) as their Contributions were paid by their respective Officers.*

And surely, we may from hence infer, that Ours was a Church of singular and superlative Note and Eminency, and very transcendently dignified in those Days, since so many surrounding Townships (as they are called) became Contributaries, with the better Grace and greater Solemnity to celebrate the Feast to the pious Memory of its Dedication.

I cannot indeed, by the strictest Scrutiny that I have been able to make, find in express Words, to whom the Church was Dedicated. But St. Margaret's Day being (as I observed before) the Chief and most Solemn Day of its Dedication-Festival,
may

may strongly incline us to believe, that it was Dedicated to that † Saint's Memory.

But then I must add, that within the Noble Fa-brick were Three Altars. For besides That in the Chancel, there was One in the Apartment, now called the School-House; another in the opposite Place ||, now called the Batchellor's Pew: One of which was Our Lady's; the other St. John's Altar. Tho' I cannot find (I say) the Altar in the Chancel to be distinguished by any Saint's Name; but always called The High Altar.*

There is one thing more, that I am willing to take notice of, which I discover'd from the Church-Wardens Accounts for the Tears 1497, and 1498: namely, that the Church had been robb'd: It is not indeed, said of what; but certainly, of Things of a considerable Value, as we may justly conjecture from the Remains which the Sacrilegious Hands had left behind them.

For in those Two Tears Accounts made together, after the Wardens had particularly charged so much paid to Messengers sent to London, to Oxford, to Cambridge, to St. Ives, to search for the Church-

† St. Margaret was born at Antioch, and Daughter of an Heathen Priest. Olybius, Prefident of the East, under the Romans, had an Inclination to marry her: But finding she was a Christian, he respitied it, till he could persuade her to leave her Religion; which she absolutely refusing, his Love turned into Hatred and Cruelty to her; putting her to divers unmerciful Tortures: At last he cut off her Head. *Nicholls's Comment. on the Com. Prayer.*

* Then Our Lady's Chapel. || Then St. John's Chapel.
Goods;

Goods; it appears, that an Inventory was then made of the rest that had escap'd the Sacrilege: For at the Conclusion of the said Accounts, they charge so much given for writing the Inventory of the Church-Goods. which was then prefixed to the said Book of Accounts.

It would not, I am sure, be unpleasant to the Curious, to see the Inventory in Words at length; but I have not room for it here (whatever I may have upon another Occasion hereafter.) I can only now stay to observe, That

The Sacerdotal Copes and Garments were very numerous, suited to the several Orders and Degrees of Priests, Deacons and Sub-Deacons. Some of which Attire was indeed of a coarser sort, to be worn in Lent and on Fasts: But the Sunday and Ferial Vestments were very splendid and rich.

Some of Red, some of Blue Velvet. Others of White, Black, Red, Blue and Green Silk, wrought and embroyder'd with Angels in Gold, with the salutation of our Blessed Lady, with Lions and Swans in Gold, with Crosses and Crowns of Gold, with Leopards and Cranes, and Eagles in Gold, with Flowers de Luce, and other Flowers; and were also adorned with rich Fringes, Tassels and Knots of Gold.

The several Altar-Cloaths, Hangings and Curtains, were likewise of Velvet and Silk of various Colours, wrought and painted with the like curious Figures and Representations.

The Banner-Cloaths and Streamers, of Red and Green Silk (to be worn on Rogation-Days) were in like

The Dedication.

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like manner painted and embroider'd with Dragons, with the Image of our Lady, with the Image of the Trinity and St. George, and of St. George and the Dragon.

A Cloth for the High Crucifix, stain'd with the Cross, and all the Instruments of the Passion.

Cloaths in the Rood-Loft, stain'd and painted with the Apostles, and with an Eagle and Lilly-Pot.

A Velvet-Cloth for the Canopy, to be born over the Blessed Sacrament, with the Image of the Crucifix broider'd in the midst therof, and the Names of the Donors in the four Corners.

I must but just mention the Cloaths for the Images, the Linnen Cloaths, Towels, (one of which contained in Length xxix Yards of Diaper, another xix of Flaxen) Napkins, Velvet and Silk Cushions, Crucifixes, Crosses and Staves, Chalice, Candlesticks, Standards, Books, Pyxes, Crewets, a Wine-Bottle of Leather, Basons, Crysmatories, and the like kind of Furniture. For a particular Account of all which, I must refer you to the Inventory it self, which may be seen in the Old Book aforesaid, now in the Church-Library.

I will only further beg leave to add, that I would not be understood as if I intended by these Hints to recommend any thing in the House of God that's Gawdy and Theatrical, or that looks like Vain Pomp, Superstitious Pageantry, or Idolatry. But certainly, what's gravely Magnificent, and decently Ornamental, may very well become the Sacred Courts of the Great King of all the World.

And

And This (I rejoyce to say) is now in some measure, the present State of the Magnificent Edifice, in which we worship the God of our Fathers. I am obliged, very gratefully to acknowledge that great Things have of late Tears been done to the lofty Structure, by extraordinary Church-Rates; but yet that a great deal is owing to the generous Bounty and Munificence of a Gentleman, whose Name and good Deeds I could here very willingly commemorate; but being under the Restraint of a strict and solemn Prohibition, I can only pray God to reward him openly at the last Day.

And that it may please the same Author and Giver of all Good Things, to remember you all concerning this, and not to wipe out the good Deeds that you have done for the House of our God, is (in the Words of Nehemiah, Chap. 13. v. 14.) the sincere and hearty Prayer of,

(My Worthy and very good Friends)

Your most Faithful and

July 15. 1717.

Humble Servant

Tho. Hewerdine.

ACTS

A C T S xxiv. 14.

But this I confess unto thee, that after the Way which they call Heresie, so worship I the God of my Father.

BY which *Way* is meant the *Christian Religion*, or the *Way of Worship* in the then *Christian Church*: For so the First Christians were called *Men and Women of this Way*, Acts 9. 2. And again, *This Way* was evil spoken of, Acts 19. 9. And in the 23^d Verse of the same Chapter, *there was no small Stir about this Way*. Such was the *Madness of the People* at that time, so violent their *Insurrections*, their *Routs and Riots* against *Primitive Christianity*, that the *Professors* of it were not only reviled and branded as *Hereticks*, but prosecuted as the worst of *Criminals*.

And this was *St. Paul's Case* in my Text: He was even then arraign'd and accus'd before the Governour *Felix*, as a *pestilent Fellow*, and a *Mover of Sedition*; because he was a *Ringleader of the Sect of the Nazerenes*, as the Christians were then spitefully called.

And yet at the very *Bar*, and to the very *Faces* of that keen Pleader and Orator *Tertullus*, and the rest of those rancorous and enraged *Jews*, that managed against him, our Glorious and Undaunted *Apostle* was neither afraid nor ashamed to own himself a *Worshipper of God after this Way*. But, said he to the very Judge himself, at whose *Tribunal* he then stood,

This I confess unto thee, that after the Way which they call Heresie, so worship I the God of my Fathers.

After the Way which they call Heresie! There is indeed a very formidable *Wo*denounced against those who call *Evil Good, and Good Evil*, Isa. 5. 20. And yet it has been an old Disease, a common Phrensie, in most Ages; and almost all Nations, Languages and People have been infected with it. Many and great *Evils* have thus play'd the Cheat in *Disguise*, and have put upon the deluded World by this *Forgery of false Titles*, and by stamping upon themselves *Good Names*. For thus, how many wild *Enthusiasts* has a mere *warm Fancy* made, when it has pass'd for *Conscience*? And how oft and ruefully has *Persecution* arose, and broke out in *Flames*, under the Notion of a *burning Zeal*? Even *Faction* it self has ensnar'd its Thousands, through the *Mask of Faith*; and *Rebellion* its Ten Thousands, under the *Cloak of Religion*. And then,

As it is a common Stratagem thus to *mis-lead* Men into *Evil*, by perfuming and smoothing it over with the *precious Ointment of a Good Name*; even so, on the other hand, 'tis a like usual Device, to *drive* them from That which is *Good*, by exposing it in *black and frightful Characters*, and by fastening upon it an *ill Name*. As for instance again; all *Good Order and Decency* in the House of God, how unmercifully have they been railed at, and turned out of *Doors*, for no other reason in the World but this, that they were slander'd and abus'd with *bad Sounds*, and mis-call'd by the *Hard Names of Superstition and Idolatry*?

'Tis true, indeed, there may be reason sometimes for speaking plain, and for *calling Evil Things by Evil Names*. And would it not be well if it was always so? that a flattering Paint might never be laid on, either to mend the Complexion, or to hide the Deformities

ties of what is really *Evil* ; but that it might be always expos'd in its own ugly Shapes and Colours, and called by its own *proper Name* ?

But then again, I would have the same Justice done on the other side, to what is *Virtuous and Good*. As I would have no Vice dignify'd with any such *Title of Respect*, as may bespeak it a Reputation in the World ; so neither would I have any Virtue suffer in its Character by any *discrediting Appellatives*. But

So long as there is a Devil in Hell, and Men of Interest and ill Designs upon Earth, the best things will be liable to be the most and worst abus'd : And so long as there is any *Darkness* in the World, the *Light* it self must expect to be sometimes *clouded*. And as the *Stoick* in *Lucian*, when he could not otherwise oppose the Truth, fell a *calling Names* ; even so the Enemies of Religion, when they have no more that they can do, they will not fail to *blacken it*, and to *throw Dirt enough* upon it, with their wonted Assurance, *that some of it will stick*.

And this was the unhappy Fate and Portion of the Christian Religion in its most innocent Infancy. *As concerning this Sect*, said the Jews, *we know, that every where it is spoken against*, Acts 28. 22. And as it was in the Beginning, so it has been in all Ages. Even when Christianity had survived Tyranny and Ten Persecutions, and the wicked Hands of Men were ty'd up from raging against it with the *Sword* ; yet still those *sharper Swords*, the *Tongues* of Men, were let loose against it, and it pass'd the *Trial of Cruel Mockings*, and went through a World of *Evil Report* and Slander.

If it were needful, I could give you long and large Accounts of this, quite through the *Seventeen Centuries* that are already past ; but I think it now more seasonable, and more proper for the present Solemnity, to come nearer home.

We are at this time to be *joyful in the Lord* for the *Dedication* of this particular *Church* in which we are now assembled ; and to celebrate the *Memorial* with an *Exultation* and *Gladfomeness* becoming the *Religious Occasion* : For now is the *Annual Return* of its *Consecration-Festival*. And This *House of God* is not a *Temple of Idols*. No, there is not the least *Idolatry* or *Superstition*, *Popery* or *Fanaticism*, in that *Way* in which we do here *worship the God of our Fathers*.

And yet, as *Herésie*, *Herésie* was still the Bolt that was shot by Fools at every turn, against the *primitive Way of Worship* ; even so, in these latter Times, has *Popery* been the odious and reproachful Word given to our *Way of Worship in the Church of England* ; and which has begot as much angry Prejudice, and ill Blood against it, as was created against ~~the~~ the *Primitive Worship*, by the malicious Charge of *Herésie*. But now,

As the present *Anniversary* obliges us (as I said before) with pious and grateful Hearts to *commemorate the Dedication of this Church*, I think, we cannot discharge our Duty in the Case to better purpose, than by vindicating and justifying that *Worship of God* in this Sacred Place, which is by *Law established*.

And therefore to do this as *Compendiously* as I can, I will endeavour to wipe off at once, all that *Aspersions of Popery*, which in a general Way is laid to the Charge of our whole *Common-Prayer-Book* ; viz. When it is falsely accused to be no other, or better, than the *Popish Mass-Book* it self translated into English.

This,

This, I confess, is no new Accusation ; nor has it escap'd unanswer'd : But enough has been said (as one might justly have hop'd) to have hiss'd it from off the Stage of Controversie for ever, and to have bury'd it in an Eternal Silence. But, it seems, it was not *Dead*, but only *slept*, and is now again very unkindly and unreasonably *awak'd* and renew'd by some *False Brethren* among our selves, and that most excellent *Way* is once more call'd *Poper*y, after which *we worship the God of our Fathers*.

I shall take leave to speak very plainly, and as briefly as is possible to this Matter.

And in the first place, I will not be afraid to say, that if our *Way of Worship* here was really and truly according to the *Mass-Book*, I would not lose this very Opportunity of calling upon, and persuading you to become *Dissenters* ; to forsake *This*, and all other *Assemblies of the Church of England* ; to come out from among them, and not to partake with them in their Sins.

But this is not (God be thanked) this is not our Case, as I will now undertake (begging your Permission and Patience) very clearly to shew you.

And might I now be heard by those who have raised and renewed the fresh Cry against our *Common-Prayer-Books*, that they are *English Mass-Books*, I would, without either *Heat* or *Flame*, very *Calmly* and *Undisturbedly* thank them for this wonderful Favour, that they will own our Prayers to be *entirely English* : For they own them consequently, not to be altogether so *Popish* as the *Mass-Book* Prayers are. For the *Mass-Book* Prayers are in *Latin*, and are such as *St. Paul* tells us, *the Unlearned cannot say Amen* to. They are in
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an *Unknown Tongue* to the *Vulgar*, which is a gross Piece of *Popery*, of which our Prayers in the *Common-Prayer-Book* are thus confess'd *Not Guilty*.

And I must add, that 'tis too great a Kindness in all Conscience, too much Honour done, and too much Commendation given to the *Mafs-Book*, when it so clearly and designedly intimated to People that understand it not, to be as excellent and good a Book as the *Common-Prayer-Book* is.

You who know and understand the *Common-Prayer-Book*, when you hear it said to be the *Mafs-Book in English*, I beseech you to tell me, what sort of Prayers can you then imagine the *Mafs-Book* to contain? Can you have the least Suspicion or Jealousie, that there are any Prayers in it to the *Virgin Mary*? Any Invocations of *Saints* or *Angels*? Why? You very well know, and cannot but acknowledge, that there are no such *Idolatrous* Prayers or Invocations in the *Common-Prayer-Book*. And therefore the frightful and sad Tale that is told of the Likeness of the *Common-Prayer-Book* with the *Mafs-Book*, 'tis what some Men call a mere *pious Fraud*: A very fine and fair (tho' false) Pretence to cozen and delude the Ignorant into a much better Opinion of the *Mafs-Book* than they ought to have.

But here then, to clear up this matter from the very Bottom,

Suppose that you had a *Legal Commission*, a just Power and Authority to accomplish (what has so long been wish'd for) a happy Reformation in the *Church of Rome*. Suppose, I say, that the *Fan* was put into your Hands, lawfully and rightfully to purge that *Floor*: What, would you make no Difference between the *Wheat* and the *Tares*; or between the *Corn* and the *Chaff*? But would you fan all away together?

together? Why truly, this would be a right *Exemplification* the *shortest Way*; and such a one would be a *Thorough Purgation* indeed, and just like the *Thorough Reformation* which has been so long rung in our Ears.

But more particularly, First, Suppose, that you were to reform that Church's *Creed*, which contains all the Articles of her present Faith: And

Secondly, That you were to reform her *Prayers*, and her *Way of Worship*, which is now according to that Faith.

First, Suppose, that you were to reform that Church's *Creed*, which contains all the Articles of her present Faith.

Now in this Case, to proceed fairly, righteously and soberly, without all unjust Partiality, and blind Prejudice, you could not deny, but that even in the *Church of Rome*, they believe all the Articles of the *Christian Faith*; and that too, not only as they are contained in the *Apostles Creed*, but as they are explained in the *Nicene* and *Athanasian Creeds*.

They believe all that we believe; and I hope that so far you will readily allow and confess *their Faith* as well as *ours*, to be the truly *Ancient, Catholick and Apostolick Faith*, and to need no Reformation. You could not indeed, for shame, pretend to wrangle with them about this *Faith which was once deliver'd to the Saints*. Their Belief is thus far unquestionable; or, at the least, there can be no Dispute between *Us* and *Them* about it; but only *this*, That *We* account it *sufficient*, and *They* do not. And this, in short, is the true State of the Case; though it be very true, that They be-
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lieve all the *Three Creeds* that We believe ; yet we cannot believe all that They believe.

And from hence it is, that we are to start the Controversie ; and what we lay to their Charge, is this : To the *Twelve Articles of the Apostles Creed* they have made very numerous and very *Antichristian Additions* ; and have exceedingly encreas'd and multiply'd that *Apostolical Number*. For,

They further profess to believe *Transubstantiation*, and that there is a *Purgatory*, and that the *Souls there detained*, are helped by the *Suffrages of the Faithful*.

As also, that the *Saints who reign together with Christ*, are to be worshipped and pray'd to, and their *Reliques* to be venerated.

And that the *Images of Christ, of the Blessed Virgin, and of the other Saints*, are to be had and retained, and that due *Honour and Worship* are to be imparted to them.

And that the *Power of Indulgences* was left by *Christ* to his Church, and that the *Use of them* is most salutary to *Christian People*.

And that there are *Seven true and proper Sacraments of the New Covenant* instituted by our Lord *Jesue Christ* ; and a great deal more of the like nature.

And these are those *Articles* which are peculiar to the Church of Rome. This is their own *Roman Creed* ; this the true *Poperie* of their Faith : And it is about these new, Roman, *Popish Articles* that we differ and dispute with them. These are what we cannot, dare not embrace ; as being rather contrary to the Word of God, than either contained therein, or to be proved thereby. Nay, but thus far it is that they have swelled and deformed their Creed ; and thus far therefore it ought to be reformed ; and even your *Thorough Reformation* thus far would be no more than necessary.

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But then you would *sufficiently reform* their Creed for them, by pronouncing the Sentence of a *Deleatur* upon every one of these *Additional Articles*; and 'twould be enough to *expunge* and blot out of it, I *believe Transubstantiation*; I *constantly hold that there is a Purgatory*; I *most firmly assert, that the Saints are to be worshipped and pray'd to*, and the like. But after all this, you must be sure to stop in good time, and to remember, that 'tis only their *Roman*, and not their *Catholick and Apostolick Faith*, that you are to condemn: No, but you are still to allow them to *believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord*; and so on to the End of the *Apostles Creed*.

And then Secondly, Suppose, that you were to reform their *Prayers*, and their *Way of Worship*, which is now according to their *Faith*.

Why truly, here again you must be pleased to know, that even in their *Mass-Book*, there are some very good Prayers; yea, that best and perfectest of Prayers, the *Lord's Prayer* it self; which must be humbly acknowleg'd, to want no *Reformation*.

But then, though we cannot wise, or justly find fault with *That*, or with any other Part of their *publick Worship*, which is grounded upon, and may be justify'd by their *Christian Belief*: yet the Points of their *Roman Creed* betray and ensnare them into a still farther Worship, that wants to be *reform'd* as much as that *Roman Creed* it self does.

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For,

For, though by their good *Old Christian Faith* they are oblig'd to worship their *Creator* only ; yet by their *New Roman Faith* they are bound to worship *Creatures* also. And though by their *Christian Belief*, *Jesus Christ* is their *Only Mediator* and *Advocate* ; yet by their *Roman*, the *Blessed Virgin* and the *Blessed Saints* are joyned with him.

By their *Belief of Transubstantiation* , they are engaged to the *Adoration of the Host* ; and by their *Belief of Purgatory*, it becomes their *Duty* to *pray for the Dead*, and for the *Delivery* of their burning *Souls* out of those imaginary *Flames*.

Their *Worship of Saints, Images and Reliques*, their *Latin Service*, and their *maim'd Communion*, are owing to the same *Popish Creed* too.

And hence it is likewise, that besides the good *Prayers to God* in the *Mass-Book*, there are also some other very *Sinful* and *Idolatrous Ones* : For such are their *Prayers to the Virgin Mary*, their *Invocations of Angels and Arch-Angels*, of all the *Orders of Blessed Spirits* , of the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, of *St. Peter* and all the other *Apostles*, of all the *Holy Martyrs*, and *Bishops*, and *Confessors*, and *Holy Doctors*, and *Priests*, and *Levites*, and *Monks*, and *Hermits*, and *Virgins*, and *Widows*, and I know not whom. Nay, and hence it is, that they have *Images bless'd and consecrated*, and set up to receive *Incense*, *Oblations*, and many *Honours* from them, and to *excite their Devotion unto their Saints and Patrons*.

And this is what we truly call the *Popery* of their *Worship* ; and to purge it from all these *Corruptions*, a *Thorough Reformation* would be altogether necessary : And you would do well to dash out of the *Mass-Book* with some *Indignation*,
all

all its *Idolatrous Prayers* and *Invocations of Saints* and *Angels* : But then, I hope, that the *Lord's Prayer*; and the good *Prayers to God the Father, to God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost*, might escape your *Wrath*, and be allow'd of as good *Prayers* still.

And this was the wise, the temperate and reasonable *Method* which the pious and good *Men* took who were the happy *Reformers of the Church of England*. They did not inconsiderately, rashly, lightly, or wantonly pass *Sentence* upon any thing, much less upon every thing, before *Trial* : No, but very discreetly soberly, coolly, advisedly, and in the *Fear of God*, did they try all things, and chose the *Good*, as well as refused the *Evil*.

They did not go about to frame *New Creeds*, or to invent a *New Way of Worship*; but to reform the *Old*. They thought it enough to reject the *Novel Inventions*, the *Superstitious and Idolatrous Practices* that had been introduc'd and added to the *primitive Worship* : But they were exceedingly careful to spare that *primitive Worship* it self, so far as it remained in its first and *Apostolick Purity*.

They did not (as some have been taught very madly to do) give the hard *Name of Popery*, right or wrong, to the whole *Mass-Book*, without exception : For then the *Three Creeds* must have been called *Popish Creeds*, and the *Lord's Prayer* a *Popish Prayer* : But they did not, I say, proceed at any such wild rate ; but as they proved all things, so they held fast that which was good : And as they try'd the things that differ'd (as the *Original Words* may signifie, εἰς τὸ συνιέναι ὁμῶς τὰ διαφέρῃα ;) so they approved the things that are excellent, as the same *Words* are very well translated in our *English Bibles*, *Phil. i. 10.*

And certainly, what is truly good and excellent, is never the less so, for having been in the *Mass-book*. But the warm *Men*, who are so absurd and peevish,

as to quarrel with any of our *Hymns, Collects* or *Prayers* upon that account; they may e'en as wisely, and as well find fault with the *cleanest and best Wheat*, for its having been among the *Straw* and the *Chaff*; or with the *finest and purest Gold*, for its having been among the *Dirt* and the *Dross*. In a Word,

If the *Church of England* does now agree with the *Church of Rome* in any Part of her *Creed*, or of her *Worship*, it is not in any of the *New, Roman, Idolatrous* or *Popish* Parts of them; it is not in any of her *Innovations in Faith*, or *Corruptions in Worship*; but only in those Things that are *Ancient* and *Apostolick*, and in which she agrees with the *Holy Scriptures*, and with the *primitive Church*. And surely, I shall not need to say, that we must not differ with the *Holy Scriptures*, and with the *Primitive Church*, because the *Church of Rome* does in some things agree with them.

We have indeed, left the *Church of Rome* in every *Foot and Tittle* of her *Popery*. We do not own the *Pope's Supremacy*, or his *Infallibility*. We retain none of their *New Articles of Faith*. We do not hold *Transubstantiation*, or that there is a *Purgatory*, that *Pardons* are to be bought, or *Indulgencies* to be purchased. We have no more *Sacraments* thrust upon us, than our *Lord* himself has instituted. We deny the *Layity* no Part of the *Lord's Supper*; nor do we forbid 'em to read the *Holy Scriptures*, or fobb them off with *Unwritten Traditions*, or *Romantick Legends*. We worship none but *God*. We desire the *Intercession* of our *Saviour*, as our *only Mediator* and *Advocate*; and dare not admit the most glorious *Saints* to the least *Partnership* with him in his *Mediatorial Office*. No *Images* or *Relicks* are here worshipped. Here's no *Adoration of the Host*, or *Masses for the Dead*. We pray neither to *Saints* or *Angels*, or to the *Virgin Mary*. Our *Liturgy* is in a *known Tongue*; and I challenge all the *World* to shew so much as one *indecent*,
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incoherent, or irreverent Expression in it: Nay, but as thus Reform'd, and now used in the Church of England, 'tis a most exact Resemblance of the primitive Worship in its greatest Purity.

And after all this, may we not well stand amazed at their confident Noise and Clamour, who will not yet cease laying *Popery* to our charge? Surely, they know not what they say; they are ignorant what *Popery* is. And this (as I humbly conceive) being the best Excuse that can be made for them, I will forbear all further Censure.

And what now remains, but that we do with glad-some and grateful Hearts, embrace all possible Opportunities of assembling our selves together in our most excellent and primitive Way to worship the God of our Fathers.

And, believe me, the *publick Worship of God* is not such a trivial Thing, as that it may be neglected for every poor and lame Excuse, or upon every slender Pretence of Scruple or Inconveniency, or as oft as a cross Humour, or superstitious Niceness may find fault, or a discontented Eye may espy in it some Matter of Dislike.

For after all, we must (to confess the Truth) we must go to Heaven to find a Church without Spot or Wrinkle; and we could not joyn in any Way of *publick Worship* this Day upon Earth, if every Thing that's liable to *Exception*, should oblige us to forsake it. By such a loose and giddy Principle, would the best Church in this World be made obnoxious to *eternal Schisms*, to be shatter'd into *numberless Factions*, to be mangled and crumbled all to pieces, to be divided and subdivided without any End.

For thus, I will here suppose even of *our Way of Worship*, that 'tis possible to change and alter it for the better; to order some Things in it with more Decency, and more to *Edification*, than some will imagine

gine them to be now order'd. Yes, and to please 'em if I can, I will further suppose, That *they* had the Ordering of *these things* accordingly. Well, and if so? Yet when they should have done their best, I doubt not, but *others* as humourfome and self-conceited as themselves, would be for Altering again, and for Correcting and Mending what they had so wisely order'd.

And if they were *all* to have their *own* Wills, and to go their *own* Ways, and to follow their *own* ~~in-~~ Inventions, what mad Confusions would ensue? May I not venture to say, that they would never *all* agree, that they would never *all* be pleas'd, that there never could be any *fix'd* or *settled* Worship, so long as the World stands?

But what then is to be done for Peace and Unity among our selves? Why truly, *Authority*, without doubt, is to over-rule in this Case, and to bring to Agreement our differing Fancies, and never ought we to advance our private Conceits to the publick Resolutions. 'Tis monstrous Pride and Perverseness, to be over-nice and busie in censuring and condemning what we are bound to obey.

And pray, let me ask this plain Question: Was there ever yet any Law contriv'd by the Wit of Man, that no body could find fault with? If we were to obey no Laws, till such Laws could be invented, as would please every body, I am afraid, that there never would be any such thing as Obedience in the World. And therefore all that we can modestly do in the Case of Obedience, is but to enquire whether the Laws of God be observ'd; and if so, the Dispute, for all us, must be at an end; and we must *obey Authority in all lawful things*.

And now, at last, I will only farther say in the Behalf of our *Way of Worship*, That there is not the least Thing enjoyn'd it, that interferes with any Law
of

of God, or that's any ways repugnant to the least *Foot or Tittle* of his *Written Word*. No, there is not ; I am very sure, there is not a *Chapter* or *Verse* in the whole *Bible*, that forbids any thing that's at any time requir'd of us in our *Church-Assemblies*.

And to some Men we need no other Evidence of This, than *that Occasional Communion* which has made such a Noise in the World. And certainly, a *tender Conscience* will not upon any Occasion whatever, give a Man leave to do, what he believes and knows to be sinful. And therefore he, whose *Conscience* can give him leave to *communicate with us upon Occasion*, it must at the same time tell him, that he may do it without Sin, and consequently, that *our Church requires no sinful Terms of Communion*.

And thus is she justify'd and held guiltless : She has the Testimony of all the *Occasional Conformists* ; and you must either allow their Evidence, or condemn their *Occasional Communion* : Which is all that I ask at present.

And upon the whole matter, I will now conclude concerning our selves, and take it for granted, That none of us will ever be asham'd or afraid to say, that *after the Way, which some maliciously, and some ignorantly call Popery* ; so will we worship the God of our Fathers.

Now to the Holy, Blessed, and Glorious Trinity, Three Persons and One God, be ascrib'd (as is most due) all Honour, Glory, Praise, Dominion, and Adoration, for evermore. Amen.

F I N I S.

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